

E. Transportation

1. Highways and Roadways

All streets in Long Beach are City-owned with exception of portions of Park Avenue and Long Beach Road, and their maintenance and repair is the responsibility of the City Department of Public Works. Park Avenue, between Long Beach and Maple Boulevards, and Long Beach Road, between Park Avenue and the Long Beach Bridge are owned and maintained by Nassau County. Many streets are in poor condition and in need of repair and maintenance. One street in the West End: Oceanview Avenue from Connecticut to Pennsylvania Avenues, has been designated a bike route and is closed to vehicle through-traffic.

The City's Department of Public Works developed a Roadway Evaluation Plan in December 2005 to evaluate the conditions of the city's roadways and to prioritize repair and reconstruction. The City receives about \$300,000 annually from the New York State Consolidated Highway Improvement Program (CHIP) to reconstruct roadways. On average, it costs about \$600,000 to provide complete reconstruction of a roadway segment. In many cases, complete reconstruction, including replacement of the sewer and water lines, roadbed, curbs, sidewalks, landscaping and street lighting underground systems, is recommended due to the poor condition of utilities. Additional expense is often incurred because the flat roadways of Long Beach present design problems.

The condition of the roadways is a citywide issue. Numerous streets are in disrepair, particularly in the Presidents Streets and Westholme neighborhoods.

The LIRR and Long Beach Road Bridges cross Reynolds Channel. The Long Beach Bridge is a bascule bridge with twin spans and has a 100 feet wide clear span and a 20 feet vertical clearance (above mean high water). The LIRR bridge is a swing bridge with a 85 feet horizontal clearance (open) and a 14 feet vertical clearance.

The Long Beach Bridge opened to traffic on June 18, 1922. The original span, which provided four 10-foot-wide lanes of traffic (two lanes in each direction) over Reynolds Channel, provided the first fixed link between the barrier island and Long Island. Unlike the original Atlantic Beach Bridge (which opened in 1927) and the Loop Parkway (which opened in 1934), the Long Beach Bridge was a free crossing. The original span only had a fixed clearance of 18 feet above mean high water, a situation that required 2,000 bridge openings per year. The new Long Beach Bridge consists of two parallel bascule spans, each carrying three 12-foot-wide lanes, as well as sidewalks for pedestrians and cyclists and was opened to traffic in 1955. Each 150-foot-long bascule drawbridge was constructed with an above-water clearance of 29 feet, a design that was estimated to reduce the number of bridge openings from 2,000 to 200 per year. The east span, which carries three lanes of northbound traffic over Reynolds Channel, opened to traffic on May 19, 1955. Fourteen months later, the west span, which carries three lanes of southbound traffic across the channel, opened to traffic. In the summer of 2002, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the NCDPW began a \$16 million project to rebuild the bridge. The project, which included rehabilitating the superstructure, abutments and seawall (including seismic retrofit); upgrading electrical and mechanical systems; and rebuilding the approaches, was completed in 2004.

2. Parking

The multi-modal transportation center adjacent to the Long Island Rail Road station on Park Avenue was completed in 2004 and has approximately 350 parking spaces for commuters, shoppers and visitors to City Hall. The City operates landscaped parking malls in the downtown area that have a two-hour time limit. Several other roadway medians, including Broadway, contain City-owned parking spaces, all of which are free. Other municipal lots include the area behind City Hall that is restricted to use by municipal employees and public parking lots located on West Beech Street at Connecticut Avenue, Maryland Avenue and Vermont Street and on Long Beach Boulevard at the corner of East Walnut Street. The Long Beach Boulevard municipal parking garage was renovated in 2001, and is considered to be in good condition. The garage provides storage and maintenance facilities for City-owned vehicles and buses.

The location of the Department of Public Works (DPW) municipal parking garage is considered problematic. It is the first building visitors see upon entering the city from Long Beach Boulevard and is considered unattractive in appearance. Additionally, buses and city vehicles have difficulty turning into the lot because of Long Beach Boulevard traffic congestion, delays which then create further congestion. Additionally, there is not enough room in the structure for a natural gas refueling station, so the City is unable to switch to more environmentally friendly natural gas vehicles.

If there is any common complaint discussed more often than local traffic conditions in the city, it is the shortage of parking. The problem is exacerbated during the summer, particularly near the beach areas, and in the West End near the local bars and restaurants on evenings and on weekends.

Parking exists in a variety of types throughout the city. In the downtown area, there is on-street curbside parking along both sides of Park Avenue that is supplemented by parking lots within the center mall areas. A similar situation is found along many intersecting side streets. In addition, there are larger parking fields adjoining City Hall, the LIRR terminal and the bus station, and smaller parking lots on Beech Street in the West End. Elsewhere, on-street parking varies by section of the city. In many areas, there is a significant amount of on-street parking in front of residential properties. However, in other areas, the smaller property sizes, with intermittent driveways, yield a much lower number of on-street spaces. As a result, visitors and local residents often have to circle around their neighborhood in search of available vacant spaces.

Although there is a significant amount of on-street parking along Broadway in the beach areas, it is insufficient during the popular summer season, resulting in a spillover of parking into the adjoining residential areas. In the vicinity of the beachfront area, there is a need to balance parking supply and demand. As identified in the Comprehensive Plan, this balance can be achieved by increasing the supply of

public parking (through the creation of additional parking areas or possible re-striping of parking stalls to achieve more spaces), decreasing the demand for parking (through increased public transportation service from the downtown area to the beaches), improving pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and safety (in order to increase non-motorized travel), or a combination of these. The same issues arise with respect to the parking situation in the West End area. In the downtown area, it is possible that there may be adequate parking overall (especially following completion of the new garage adjacent to the LIRR station), but there may need to be a restructuring of the parking regulations, so that the time limits better match the needs of shoppers, employees, commuters and residents.

3. Public Transportation

The City of Long Beach operates its own 12 buses and several bus routes. All City buses remain only within the city, with the exception of the Point Lookout route that travels from the LIRR station in Long Beach to Point Lookout. The City operates this line on behalf of MTA/Long Island Bus for Nassau County. The Far Rockaway bus, operated by Nassau County, has stops in Long Beach. The Nassau County N15 bus that goes to Roosevelt Field also stops in Long Beach. The fare for Long Beach buses is \$1.50. It costs \$2.00 to ride the Nassau County buses and the Point Lookout bus. The Long Beach bus system operates from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. The bus system covers over 90 percent of the city, and there are 30,000 passengers per month.

The City operates five routes on the weekdays, three on Saturday and two on Sunday. The schedules do not change seasonally. There is a weekday “Shopper Special” bus that is mostly used by seniors. This route travels from the LIRR station, down Park Avenue to Maple to Broadway to Laurelton to Beech Street and back. Every Wednesday, it is extended to the West End (Nevada Avenue), otherwise it only travels as far as Lindell Boulevard.

The bus to the LIRR carries mostly commuters. There is a discounted LIRR/bus pass program (Uni-ticket) for commuters.

The City also operates a paratransit bus system for the disabled, not for seniors, that costs \$0.50 per ride. They own two paratransit buses that hold 12 passengers each and have two wheelchair spots. Passengers must schedule the ride 24 hours in advance. Paratransit ridership is increasing.

Funding for the bus system comes from the City, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) for capital funding and a \$100,000 grant from NYSDOT for operating assistance. The City system has a \$1 million operating budget and collects approximately \$375,000 to \$400,000 in revenue annually.

The Long Island Rail Road provides passenger transportation from its renovated terminal in the downtown area to other stations within Long Island and New York City. Commuting time to Manhattan is approximately 55 minutes.

The City of Long Beach offers a Shoppers Special bus schedule with additional routes, which is designed to provide transportation for Long Beach's senior citizens to major shopping destinations within the City (such as the three grocery stores) and to the Magnolia Senior Center. Fare is fifty cents for seniors, handicapped/Medicare card holders and \$1.50 for all others. Point Lookout residents are charged an additional fifty cents.

4. Pedestrian/Bicycling

As discussed in the previous section, the Reynolds Channel Esplanade and the 2¼-mile boardwalk provide opportunities for bicycling and walking/jogging. Additionally, a pedestrian and bike corridor runs east/west in the West End neighborhood, between Connecticut Street and New York Avenue. Pedestrian pathways run north/south in the Walks neighborhood, between streets Beech and Park, and New York Avenue and Lindell Avenue. Overall, the layout of Long Beach, and the existing problems arising from traffic and parking, has encouraged bicycle and pedestrian travel.

5. Evacuation Routes

If the City of Long Beach is threatened by a hurricane or major storm, Nassau Community College has been identified as the pre-designation Red Cross Shelter. There will be no Red Cross Shelter in the City of Long Beach. The City will set up staging areas for residents to wait for public transportation to the designation shelter. These staging areas will be located at West School on Maryland Avenue, East School on Neptune Boulevard, and City Hall, 1 West Chester Street.

Evacuation routes area as follows:

- Western Long Beach: Lindell Boulevard to Nevada Avenue
By Car: Take West Beech Street to the Atlantic Beach Bridge to the Nassau Expressway.
Using Public Transportation: City buses will leave from the West School to the Nassau Community College shelter.
- Central Long Beach: Lindell Boulevard to Long Beach Boulevard
By Car: Take Park Avenue to Long Beach Boulevard to travel to points north of Sunrise Highway.
Using Public Transportation: City buses will leave from City Hall to the Nassau Community College shelter.
- Easter Long Beach: Long Beach Boulevard to Maple Boulevard
By Car: Travel east on Park Avenue/Lido Boulevard to Loop Parkway to designated spots north of Sunrise Highway.

Using Public transportation: City buses will leave from East School to the Nassau Community College shelter.¹

¹ Long Beach Calendar, 2007